Innovating History Education for All

Second Consortium Meeting
25-26 August 2015
The Hague

REPORT
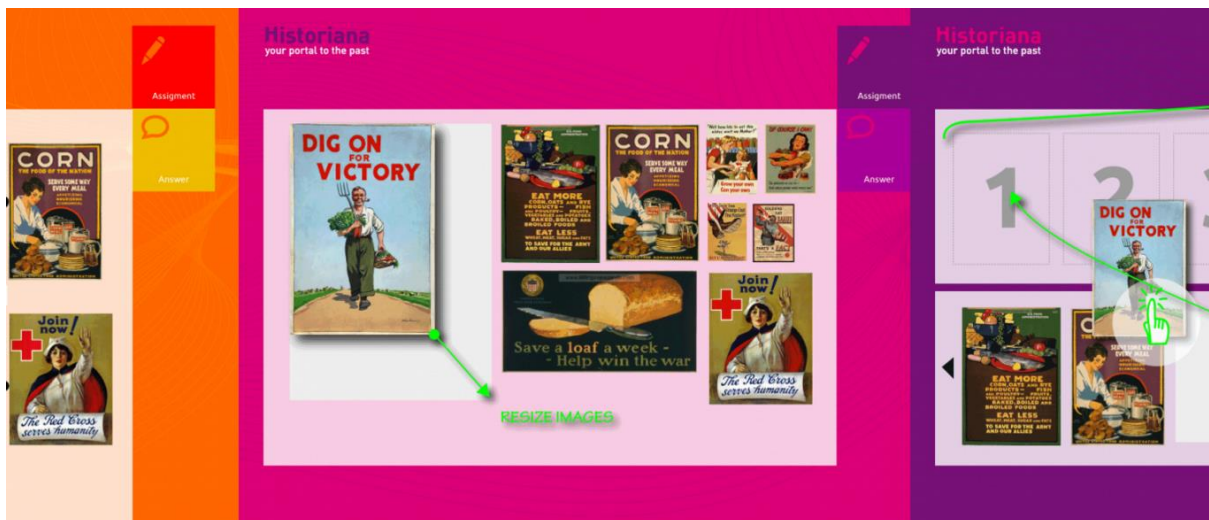
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The project partners discuss the needs assessment at the EUROCLIO office.

About the project

In the "Innovating History Education for All" (IHEA) project, specialists in history education, researchers and professional web-developers are working together to help educators make use of digital learning tools that help students acquire competences that are specific for history education. The ambition of the project is to find out what history educators really need to make best use of new technologies for the teaching and learning of history. The project works to meet those needs, by developing online learning resources, by providing training opportunities for professional development, and by advocating for policies to support digital learning for history. The project especially targets those educators that are not (yet) confident in the use of ICT, but motivated to learn.

The IHEA project aims to promote high-quality history, heritage, and citizenship education in Europe through the development, testing and implementation of digital learning resources and by researching what is needed in terms of policy and practice.
In particular, the project will:

- Enable educators to create their own **online learning activities and tools** specifically designed to promote historical thinking and transversal competences.
- Foster **competence-based approaches** to the subject based on critical thinking and the ability to analyse content in a balanced way, question and compare interpretations, assess evidence and make independent judgments.
- Support a large group of educators to become **more digitally confident**, to act as multipliers with their colleagues, and to transmit their skills to their students.

The project is implemented by a **Consortium** of partners, including Instytut Badan Edukacyjnych (Poland), Georg Eckert Institute (Germany), Mount School York (United Kingdom), Webtic (The Netherlands) and EUROCLIO. In addition there is a **core team** of 5 educators, coordinated by Helen Snelson, who work mainly on the online learning activities, tools and users' guide. The team consists of Miljenko Hajdarovic (Croatia), Natia Pirtskhalava (Georgia), Pascal Tak (The Netherlands), Richard Kennett (United Kingdom) and Súsanna Margrét Gestsdóttir (Iceland).

Executive summary

The Second Consortium Meeting was held from **25-26 August 2015** at the EUROCLIO Secretariat in The Hague. During this meeting the partners reviewed the progress made so far in the implementation of the project, and provided feedback to the preliminary results for the different intellectual outputs. The main focus was on the work done on the Needs Assessment, the research framework for the Educational Policies and Curricula research and an update on the core team meeting which focuses on the eLearning tools. The **participants** were:

- **EUROCLIO**: Judith Geerling (coordinator), Steven Stegers (coordinator), Jonathan Even-Zohar
- **Georg Eckert Institute** (GEI): Maren Tribukait
- **Instytut Badan Edukacyjnych**: Jacek Staniszewski
- **Mount School York**: Helen Snelson
- **Webtic**: Nique Sanders, Paul Jongsma

Since the first meeting in January 2015 IBE made a lot of progress on the Needs Assessment and finalised and processed the preliminary survey, two focus groups during the EUROCLIO Annual Conference in Denmark in April 2015 and drafted the second survey. The partners were also updated about the second core team meeting that took place just a few days before this meeting and where they decided on the concepts for the 3 new eLearning tools that will be developed within the project plus improvements to the existing tool on History (Analysis of Visual Sources).

The Georg Eckert Institute presented their research framework, including the preliminary selection of countries for the case studies, to which the partners gave feedback. The partners also started to think of a strategy for the multiplier events, where (some of) the project outputs will be presented to a broader public.

The **aims** of the meeting were:
- To **review the implementation** of the project so far.
- To **update** the project partners on the implementation of the project so far and on new developments for EUROCLIO and Historiana.
- To discuss and agree on the **next steps for the implementation** of the needs assessment and report on educational policies.
- To **update the time schedule** for delivery of intellectual outputs and partner meetings.

Progress EUROCLIO

Steven Stegers (EUROCLIO) presented the progress that was made for the Historiana website. The main improvement is the functionality for making and presenting a module on Historiana. A module is a structure that enables presenting Historical Content on the website with a 3-layered layout (general introduction – chapters with introductions and – subchapters with introductions, downloads including source collections or embedded tools).

EUROCLIO has been working on multiple other new projects since the last consortium meeting that are related to Historiana, including a project with Europeana

The first Historiana module: Internment without a Trial.

(the online portal that acts as an interface to millions of books, paintings, films, museum objects and archival records that have been digitised throughout Europe) that will also result in source collections and in a functionality whereby Historiana visitors are able to search for sources within the Europeana database – specifically designed to find sources that are relevant for history education and use them within the tools. In addition, EUROCLIO initiated the **Europeana Taskforce on Education** to come up with specific implementation suggestions of the Education Policy Recommendations from Europeana.[1] Through this EUROCLIO also establihsed new partnerships with the House of European History.[2]

EUROCLIO also obtained the project '**Silencing Citizens through Censorship'** that will result in a Historiana module on censorship in Europe's 20th century dictatorial and totalitarian regimes, a project on '**Strategies for Inclusion'** that will result in educational material on Historiana focussing on removing barriers to high-quality history and citizenship education – specifically making them relevant for learner variability and students that are deaf, hard-of-hearing, blind or partially-sighted.

A new initiative has started as well: the **Historiana Competition**. The idea behind the Historiana competition is to encourage educators to find practical ways to overcome a common challenge for history, heritage and citizenship educators, in this edition to create learning activities that help to address stereotypes by teaching sensitive history in divided societies. The learning activities that compete will be assessed by a jury, composed of long-time Historiana editors Ineke Veldhuis-Meester

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[1] http://pro.europeana.eu/publication/europeana-for-education-policy-recommendations
[2] For more information see http://www.europarl.europa.eu/visiting/en/visits/historyhouse.html

(The Netherlands) and Benny Christensen (Denmark). The educator with the winning activity will get the opportunity to give a workshop at the EUROCLIO Annual Conference in Belfast in March 2016.

Updates Core Team Meeting

A few days before this meeting, the Core Team also met for a second time. The team had an intensive brainstorm session on the designs that Nique Sanders from Webtic made from the ideas for the eLearning tools that were discussed in previous meetings.
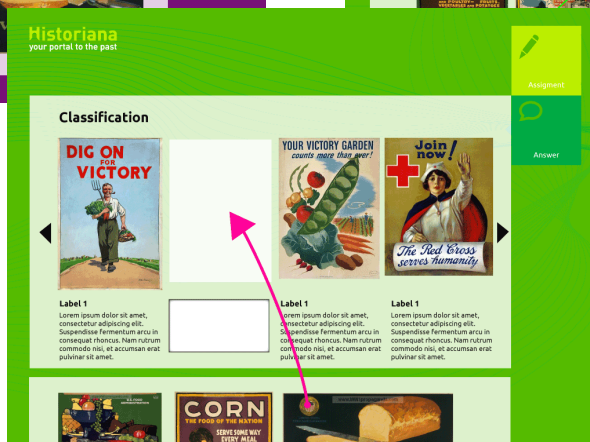

Connecting

Prioritising

Sequencing

Grouping

Organising

Five sketches were presented with different functionalities: **Connecting** (drawing relations between different sources), **prioritising** (changing the size of a source compared to the other sources to show priority, importance, weight of support for a proposition), **sequencing** (putting sources in a sequence for instance based on time), **grouping** (dividing sources over different groups, for instance pro and con) and **organising** (put sources in a sequence with a description, for instance to make a collection as if you are a museum curator).

An impression of the work on the selection of tools during the 2nd core team meeting.

Based on a session to rank innovativeness, desirability and feasibility the decision was made to build 3 new tools in this project: connecting, prioritising and sequencing, and to improve the already existing Analysis of Visual Sources tool that is already available on Historiana, but does not have all requirements to make it really useful for history teachers, such as an easy invitation mechanisms for students. [3]

Needs Assessment - Focus Group Interviews

The Focus Group Interviews were prepared and implemented by IBE during EUROCLIO's Annual Conference in Denmark in April 2015. The participants were selected based on an analysis of the preliminary survey send beforehand to all participants. In the end 12 people were selected to attend the focus groups. Every focus group consisted of two parts and lasted for about 80 minutes. In the first part the focus was on the challenges and nature of history teaching (in general) in the interviewees' countries: What is most important? What are the biggest challenges? In the second part questions were asked about the use of ICT: What software is used? What are the reasons for using ICT in school?

Based on the outcomes of the focus groups a survey was made, translated into 18 different questions and spread to the wider networks of all partners. The survey was fully completed by 235 educators. Some of the main findings were that text sources were more often used compared to visual sources, keeping in mind that every student has a different level of text comprehension and every country has

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[3] For more information on this workshop and the meeting, see Report 2nd Core Team Meeting 22-23 August 2015.

a different way of teaching (history). On the ICT level teachers generally do use tools widely available on the Internet like Dropbox or Google Docs, however not related to history teaching and if used for teaching than most software is used to present not to engage. The interviewees did mention using timelines and quiz software, but many teachers are afraid of technical problems. Still, it remains a missed opportunity and IHEA aims to enable teachers to take advantage of this opportunity and use ICT in teaching the best way possible.

Research Framework Policy Report

Maren Tribukait (Georg Eckert Institute) presented the research framework for the Policy Report, including a planned table of contents. The aim of the Report on Education Policies and Curricula is to identify and critically assess the European and national curricular guidelines that affect digital learning and OER (Open Educational Resources) in use in history classrooms in Europe. The significant European policy recommendations and exemplary national curricula frameworks and history core curricula will be analysed. The report should raise awareness among European policy makers about the adaptation of digital learning and give recommendations how to better implement digital learning in curricula for history, heritage and citizenship education. The research will also include case studies into the curricula of the following countries: Germany, Poland, Greece, Albania, Denmark, Spain, The Netherlands and the United Kingdom.

Edumeres.net

The website Edumeres.net[4] is a Curricula Workstation database in which the George Eckert Institute stores all electronically published works. The network can be used to gather information and do research, but it there is also space for work and research, in which issues can be discussed. Edumeres will be used to obtain the curricula for the country case studies.

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[4] For more information see: http://www.edumeres.net/nc/informationen/home.html

Conclusions and Next steps

The second meeting provided a good opportunity for the partners to update each other on the progress of their work. Specifically for the Needs Assessment and the Report on Education Policies and Curricula. The Consortium also agreed on an initial timeplanning for the multiplier events in which the intellectual outputs will be further disseminated to a wider network.

In the coming period **IBE** will work on processing all results of the survey and prepare and implement the in-depth interviews, after which they will finalise the first version of their report. **Webtic** will further sketch the 3 tools that were selected during the core team meeting and work on general functionalities of the online tool environment on Historiana. **Georg Eckert Institute** will process the feedback on their research framework and start with the research and first country study of Germany.

The next meeting of the consortium is planned in December in The Hague, where the first case-study of Germany will be discussed, as well as the draft version of the full needs assessment report, the first source collections and further development for the tools.